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Viewing cable 08USNATO456,

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08USNATO456**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08USNATO456	2008-12-08 10:04	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Mission USNATO

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.aftenposten.no/spesial/wikileaksdokumenter/article4026853.ece>

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OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNO #0456/01 3431004
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FM USMISSION USNATO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2545
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0015
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0668
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 1105
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 0546
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 000456
NOFORN
SIPDIS

BELGRADE PASS TO PODGORICA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2018

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RS

REF: A. USNATO 447

[1](#)B. USNATO 448

Classified By: CDA S. REID FOR REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C/NF) SUMMARY: The two-week long communique drafting session for the December 2-3 NATO Foreign Ministerial was a difficult and, at times, contentious affair. Two issues cast a long shadow over the negotiations: how to handle the Membership Action Plan applications of Georgia and Ukraine and how to address NATO-Russia relations. Ukraine and Georgia was discussed by PermReps outside the framework of the rest of the communique and was only finally settled by ministers. NATO-Russia was discussed by the communique drafters, but the inability to agree a way forward meant that it too was only resolved following a ministerial discussion. The negotiations also highlighted ongoing problems in our relationships with two key Allies: Germany and France. Germany demonstrated once again that it is strategically in a different place than the U.S. (and the UK) on a wide range of issues. These differences are further exacerbated by German FM Steinmeiers efforts to appeal to the German domestic audience as he gears up for his election challenge to Chancellor Merkel. While the French were more pragmatic than the Germans on some issues, two interrelated trends--their need to defend to the end statements by their mercurial president and their need to defend (and try to get NATO to accept unconditionally) decisions of the EU presidency--meant that they had extremely rigid and unhelpful instructions on issues such as NATO-Russia, Kosovo, piracy, and comprehensive approach. While the birthing was difficult and often painful, we believe the resulting communique (reftels) represents significant progress on a number of U.S. initiatives, such as missile defense. Equally important, the willingness of Allies to eventually compromise and find diplomatically ambiguous language for the Ukraine/Georgia and NATO-Russia sections shows that Allies are finally ready to move past our differences for now on these issues. END SUMMARY

UKRAINE/GEORGIA

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Initial attempts by the U.S. and UK to find compromise language on Ukraine and Georgia which would shift many of the reform tools currently found in the Membership Action Plan to the NATO-Ukraine Commission and NATO-Georgia Commissions, while leaving ambiguous whether or not they would eventually need to go through MAP, were initially strongly rebuffed by Germany. Berlin was insisting that it could only accept language which made clear that the two countries still had to go through MAP. Germanys strongest support was from the BENELUX countries. France played a more moderate role on this issue, willing to accept a compromise proposal from the Secretary General which Germany said it could not accept. The final compromise--which moved tools to the two commissions "without prejudice to further decisions which must be taken about MAP"--was only reached following ministerial discussion. There is, thus, creative ambiguity on whether MAP will still be required for these two countries, while moving us forward on the more important issue of providing support and assistance to these countries as they move along the reform path.

RUSSIA

[1](#)3. (C/NF) As expected, there was a fundamental divide between Allies on the approach to Russia. France posed serious issues to reaching a compromise on the Russia language, insisting it reflect EU language and the EUs understanding of Russian fulfillment of its obligations under the ceasefire agreements with Georgia. Paris would also only

allow carefully crafted language regarding Geneva talks, refusing until the last minute any reference to access for monitors. Polish persistence on a reference to the Russian threat of missiles in Kaliningrad succeeded at the last moment. The U.S. pushed for strong language throughout the section on relations with Russia (i.e. a reference to Russian assertion of a sphere of influence) and was supported strongly by Canada, the Czech Rep., Eastern European Allies (minus the Slovak Republic and Hungary) and the Baltic countries. A response to President Medvedevs European security proposal was included in the beginning of the communiqu. The language prompted disagreements, with France refusing a reference to the importance of maintaining the existing European security "framework" in the paragraph and Germany and Italy insisting "future dialogue" references be included, suggesting they wanted to be more flexible in their approach to this issue. The U.S. achieved last minute success in including the phrase "within this framework" and an explicit indication that dialogue on the Medvedev proposal would take place within the OSCE.

AFGHANISTAN

¶4. (C/NF) Due to Afghanistan being NATOs top priority , there was a lot of dialogue with the only significant resistance in the area of counter-narcotics (C-N). As expected, Germany pushed hard to keep any C-N language out of the text, highlighting that they did not want or need to reaffirm the Defense Ministers decisions from Budapest. The other main line of resistance was on providing the proper resources for the efforts in Afghanistan. Belgium, with German and Dutch support, obstructed positive language on the Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund expansion to include sustainment costs, and several nations) including the Netherlands and Germany) tried to weaken language aimed at providing "the necessary resources." Italy also led an effort to highlight reconciliation while Canada (unsuccessfully) pushed hard for NATO - as NATO and not bilateral nations) to do more police training, a traditional French/EU third rail issue.

NATO-EU, PIRACY AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

¶5. (C/NF) The trifecta of these issues highlighted the tension and lack of trust between Turkey and EU member Allies, particularly France and Greece. After several days of intensive behind the scenes work on the NATO-EU paragraph, France tabled a proposal that was able to stand with high-level negotiations to ensure references were included on piracy, and a strengthened EU defense capability, as well as coded language about Turkish concerns over European Defense Agency access. On Piracy, Spain, France and Belgium attempted to elevate the EU flag while the U.S., UK, Turkey and Greece worked hard to keep some realism in the text. The major contention was on EU members insisting that the NATO operation be complementary to any EU efforts (and indeed NATO only could do counter-piracy if working with others), while Turkey and other Allies wanted to ensure that NATOs ongoing operation was noted and there was not duplication if/when an EU operation kicks off. On the Comprehensive Approach, EU members led by France resisted references to cooperation "within organizations," because it continued to insist that NATO has no civilian capabilities. Turkey insisted on references to "shared openness" and "more coherent application of crisis management instruments" to hem in the EU states and the U.S. battled for civil-military coordination inclusion.

ENLARGEMENT, ALBANIA and CROATIA

¶6. (C/NF) The highly-charged atmosphere around the Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Ukraine and Georgia discussion bled over into discussions on "open door" and future enlargement mechanisms. Germany led a caucus of nations (including BENELUX and Spain) insisting on cementing

MAP as the only process for accession, and tried to increase the requirements and standards to be deemed worthy of Alliance membership. Poland and others insisted on including text on the Open Door policy. Additionally, the Netherlands insisted upon specific ICTY language and tried to pin Croatia down on increasing efforts in order to help with Dutch accession ratification. The U.S. attempted to keep the "open door" clearly open while others tried to close it. Some (Germany and the BENELUX) even tried unsuccessfully to add a screen door, too.

KOSOVO

17. (C/NF) Those Allies who have not recognized Kosovo yet, particularly Spain and Romania, posed serious obstacles to a compromise on the Kosovo text. The two opposed initial attempts to use UN language in the paragraph (i.e. "Kosovo authorities" versus "authorities in Kosovo" which they insisted upon until compromising in the final moments). They also insisted that a line encouraging Serbia to cooperate in the transfer of authority in Kosovo be balanced by language encouraging the Kosovo authorities also to cooperate. A reference to the "new tasks," the Kosovo Protection Corps, the Kosovo Security Force and related trust funds was particularly contentious among Allies, but ultimately prevailed in tandem with a Romanian ministerial statement that the new communiqu  text did not change Romanias national position on Kosovo recognition.

MISSILE DEFENSE and ARMS CONTROL

18. (C/NF) Negotiations on missile defense text were linked to the arms control paragraph, as the U.S. and Germany adopted various tactics to ensure their preferred language was maintained in the text. Norway joined Germany in being particularly difficult on the missile defense language, refusing to accept strong language or positive affirmation of the defense minister tasking to complete analysis for a comprehensive missile defense architecture. The reference to the Czech and Polish agreements with the U.S. posed one of the greatest obstacles, with Norway and Germany, joined by Italy and Slovakia, adamantly refusing the notion of NATO "welcoming" the agreements, insisting on more neutral language of "note". A showdown with the Czechs persisted until the final minutes on this issue, when a compromise was reached, reading "note as a relevant development." Germany insisted on strong language in the arms control text and the U.S. refused to accept German additions until concessions were made in the missile defense text and a reference to arms control as a tool "part of a broader response to security issues" was included in the arms control text.

WESTERN BALKANS

19. (C/NF) Allies were torn on language regarding NATOs response to Montenegros request for MAP but only because of how they wanted to embed repetitive references to MAP in the text. Really only the U.S. and Slovenia were in favor of even remarking on Montenegros interest in further developing Euro-Atlantic ties. Occasional Montenegro-supporter Hungary was silent, probably because of their observation that Germany, to whom they often defer at NATO, so resisted the Montenegrin mention. The UK and France also considered Montenegros aspirations sincere, but unconvincing because of Podgoricas immature institutions. Portugal offered a compromise Allies found acceptable, drawing on the "without prejudice" language agreed by ministers for Ukraine and Georgia. A divide emerged among Allies on how welcoming NATOs response should be, with Germany, Spain, Norway, Netherlands and others opposed to excessively positive language and Slovenia, Turkey, Hungary and others in favor.

110. (C/NF) The U.S. and the U.K. made a strong case for firm language on Bi-Hs current political situation and was able to strike a balance with Allies, such as Hungary and Italy, which wanted to be more positive in tone. Allies varied in

their approach to Serbia, with Italy, Hungary and Norway proposing language praising the Euro-Atlantic direction in which Belgrade has begun to head and the U.S. cautioning on drawing public attention to Belgrades emerging Euro-Atlantic aspirations. The Dutch proved very demanding on language in the Serbia section, refusing "to offer Serbia more than it has asked for" and holding a hard line against "undue praise for Serbia,"--as advocated by Hungary, Norway, and Italy--regarding developments in the ICTY.

REID